

FOREIGN ARCHITECTURAL AND COL-
LATERAL INTELLIGENCE.

The Commission of Monuments—before the Chamber of Peers.—It might have long remained unknown to the public at large, what is done in France for the preservation of ancient buildings, if the estimates thereof had not caused some observations in the French legislature, of which the following is an abstract of what was said *pro et contra*. Count Montalembert accused the commission of some acts of vandalism—negligence in the preservation of ancient monuments. The first specific charge is on account of the church of St. Germer, which the commission has allowed to crumble to pieces. Some years ago (answers the commission) the Home Secretary sent an architect to study the restoration of that building. It has suffered by a great fire, which calcined some of its walls; its buttresses are every where ruined, and the materials of the whole building very bad and perishable. Pillars, walls, buttresses—all were to be remade at a cost of 600,000 francs. As this sum seemed too high, the commission sent two other architects (one a member of the Building Council), who, however, confirmed the first report, and thus placed such a costly enterprise beyond the limits of possibility. Another reproach cast on the commission and its architects, is the demolishing of the tower of Montecorvo. It is said, however, that the foundations proved to be decayed after the necessary works had been done, and that even the consolidation of this tower (built in the thirteenth century) has been a matter of great difficulty. The course on the ruin of the belfry of Valenciennes seems to be equally unfounded, as it came down while the official steps towards its restoration were in train.

The monuments which claim the help of the commission are very numerous. Often the Secretary of State is obliged to purchase works, disliked, it seems, by the local authorities. So, for instance, the basse-cour at Beauvais; the Roman Church at Beaugency. But, if extravagant prices or expense are at stake, Government cannot afford them. The Church of Brantome—tumbling down when the architect had just applied his professional aid, has been advertised to by Count Montalembert. But another artist having been deputed for repairing the *bécue* of the former, the mischief may be yet stayed.

Statue of Conradin, Naples.—This city has been ornamented by a work of Thorwaldsen, through the liberality of H. R. H. the Hereditary Prince of Bavaria. It stands in the church St. Maria del Carmine, and has been executed in marble by P. Schnopf, who has also made the basso-reliefs on the pedestal. One represents the farewell of the last Hohenstaufen from his mother—the other from his death-companions, Prince Frederic. These were the ancestors of the Bavarian dynasty.

Notre Dame at Paris.—The Common Council of Paris, foremost in so many useful enterprises, have undertaken a work, which is to be considered preparatory to the whole restoration of the above edifice, we mean the excavation (lowering) of the square before the cathedral. The expense has been estimated very low, at 53,000 francs, but once begun the work must be finished. It is a singular observation, that the portal of this (as some other old churches) sticks now in the ground, so much so, that the pious have to descend to the sanctuary—instead of getting up to it; the unsightly proportions of the portal point also that way. The preparatory investigations have, indeed, shown that the entrance to the cathedral possessed once eleven steps—and, consequently, that the building sinks constantly beneath the surface. Whether this is to be attributed to a geological depression of the terrain, or wholly to the accumulation of rubbish, or of world-dust (as some German philosophers call it), cannot be yet decided.

Munich Architectural Appointments.—The king has appointed Mr. August Vogt, hitherto Professor of Architecture at the R. A., Superior Building Councillor at the Supreme Board—instead of the lamented Gärtner.—Eduard Meisner, Professor of Civil Buildings and Architectural Drawing at the Munich Polytechnic School, has also been nominated Superior Councillor at the Supreme Board.

Rome. Reinhart's Demise.—This venerable Nestor of European artists died lately, aged

eighty-six years, of which he passed fifty in the Roman capital. Having been acquainted with all the notoriety of the age—none who came to Rome, neglected to see Reinhart. His works are scattered over Europe from Stockholm to Sicily, amongst which his engravings are not to be forgotten. He was a great friend of the open air and the chase, which latter he practised up to a few years before his demise.

Oil from Stone.—A communication was made, some short time ago, to the French Institute about what was called "*Huile aux pierres*." The oil is perfectly clear and transparent, does not soil, and yields a flame of great intensity and cleanness. A company, formed for the manufacturing of this mineral oil, possesses in the vicinity of Autun inexhaustible strata of rock, from which not only oil, but other valuable substances, as a sort of grease (*grasses*), tar, ammoniacal water, paraffine—substances of which some are valuable as manures,—are extracted.

Free Trade and the British Iron Trade.—It was to be foreseen, that nations who sell us their goods, would, in course of time, take ours. In the two sea ports near the Danube, Galatz, and Braila, the import of English manufactures in 1844 was to the amount of 624,688 fl.; in 1846 it had risen to 4,017,423 fl. The iron and other metal ware imported now into Moldavia and Wallachia is mostly of English origin.

ARRANGEMENT OF LUNATIC ASYLUMS.

THE arrangement of lunatic asylums is likely to occupy the attention of architects and others for some time to come, and offer an excellent opportunity for the display of ability and knowledge. The chances of cure for the patients depend greatly on the building in which they are confined, and the arrangements made for them in it. Dr. Conolly remarks justly, "Although the first thing demanded by society, when we undertake to relieve it of the presence of those who cannot be at large consistently with the safety of themselves or others, is their perfect security: it must be remembered that this security does not require gloom, or a frightful apparatus. We require that the building should be on a healthy site, freely admitting light and air, and drainage. Space should be allowed for summer and winter exercise, for various employments, and for all the purposes of domestic economy. Warmth must be provided for during the winter, light for the winter evenings, coolness and shade in the summer. Separate wards and bed-rooms for the tranquil, for the sick, for the helpless, for the noisy, for the unruly or violent, and the dirty; a supply of water so copious, and a drainage so complete, that the baths, water-closets, and building in general, may always be kept perfectly clean and free from bad odours. There should be workshops and workrooms, and schoolrooms, separate from the wards, and cheerfully situated; a chapel, conveniently accessible from both sides of the asylum; as also a kitchen, a laundry, a bakehouse, a brewhouse, and rooms for stores, and all the requisites for gardening and farming; and also a surgery, and all that is necessary for the medical staff. All these are indispensable in every large public asylum."

To a profusion of embellishments be objects; he also disapproves of "painting numbers and titles on the walls of airing courts, by which the walls are disfigured, and the patients are reminded of their confinement as insane persons when walking out for relaxation, or led to consider themselves prisoners. When it is remembered that many patients are sent to an asylum whose senses are perfect, and whose feelings are as acute as those of sane people, and that from the moment they enter the outer gate every thing becomes remedial or the reverse, the reason will at once be seen why the external aspect of an asylum should be more cheerful than imposing; more resembling a well-built hospital than a place of seclusion, or imprisonment."

The architectural deficiencies of asylums built even a few years ago are notorious: many new ones must now be raised, and we recommend the careful consideration of the subject to our architectural readers. At page 349 of our last Volume (IV.), will be found some

account of the Devon Asylum, and a number of block plans of existing asylums, with remarks on their comparative advantages.

CLAY-BUILT COTTAGES.

SIR,—Having seen in your valuable paper some articles on building clay cottages, I am induced to give your readers the method which I have seen practised for these last fourteen years in Norfolk. In many parts of this county cottages are mostly built with clay walls and clay chimneys; the walls are built either in one solid piece, or else with clay lumps or bricks well dried in the sun, of any size which may be thought convenient. They are carried up in rather a rough manner to insure a good key to the plastering either inside or externally: the angles are protected by angle beads, and the plaster consists of good clay mixed with road-sand, or silt, as it is there called. But more frequently the plaster is composed of old clay and loam or mudgen, well kneaded with old straw to a proper consistency by horse-treading it. These cottages are raised about 2 feet above the surface of the earth on flint walls, or pinnings, as they call them—the remaining walls above being clay; the eaves of the roof generally project from 9 inches to 1 foot beyond the walls. The windows and door-frames should all of them have a drip-board projecting about 5 inches beyond the walls to carry off the rain. This is the method which is generally practised in Norfolk, and the cottages look very neat when well finished by a good tradesman; but it requires a good workman to finish them properly. The advantages derived from these cottages are these:—1st. Cheapness in construction. 2nd. They are warm and comfortable in winter, and cooler in summer than most other houses, and, if properly built, will last a long time.

I am, Sir, &c.,
A NORFOLK ARTISAN.

NOTES IN THE PROVINCES.

HER Majesty's Commissioners for the erection of new churches, in their 27th annual report lately published, state that twenty-one churches have been completed since the date of the last report, by aid of grants from them, with accommodation for 17,872 persons, including 13,292 free seats; and that, in the whole, 391 new churches have been completed, and provision made therein for 440,957 persons, including 251,388 free seats. The Commissioners further report, that thirty-four churches are now in course of erection, and that plans for twenty-six churches have been approved of.—The thorough repair which Ramsey Abbey Church has been undergoing for some years being well nigh finished, Wednesday week was appointed to commemorate the completion by public thanksgiving, for preservation of all and sundry from accident while engaged in the repairs.—The *Nottingham Review* announces the opening of "the People's College erected by voluntary contributions for the education of the working classes of Nottingham and its neighbourhood for ever." The building, Tudor in style, comprises seven rooms, including a large hall, with arched and groined roof, and is said to constitute "no inconsiderable ornament" to the district in which it stands.—The ancient stained glass which once adorned the cloisters of Dale Abbey, and after its dissolution, was transferred to Morley Church, has been recently restored by Mr. Warrington. The windows were very much mutilated, and many portions of them were misplaced, but they now form perfect pictures.—The plans of Mr. Johnson of Lichfield, have been selected for the restoration of Stowe Church, in that city, and plans for two new churches, one at Darlaston and one at Bilston, by the same architect, have been accepted.—At a recent meeting of the Birmingham town council, it was stated by the lunatic asylum committee, that in answer to the advertisement for tenders for the erection of the asylum, eleven tenders had been received—ten for the whole, and one for only part of the works. The committee had accepted the lowest tender, that of Mr. John Hardwick, at 38,901l. 9s. 10d. This tender excluded the boundary fence, and was subject to such alterations as might, under the advice of the architect, seem necessary. The committee contemplated meeting a portion of